

Message Text

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FOR JOSEPH EDER DIRECTOR EUROPEAN BRANCH USGAO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AGAO, ELTN
SUBJ: GAO STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL URBAN RAILCAR MARKET

REF: (A) STATE 203417; (B) PARIS 29483

1. POST CONTACTED MR. MARC TESSIER OF THE DREE CONCERNING DIFFICULTIES WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED IN OBTAINING APPOINTMENTS FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GAO TO MEET WITH FRENCH MANUFACTURERS AND PROCUREMENT OFFICIALS IN FRENCH URBAN RAILCAR SECTOR. TESSIER REITERATED THAT THE GOF HAS NO PROBLEM IN PRINCIPLE WITH THE MEETINGS AS REQUESTED AND THAT THE DREE HAS GIVEN NO INSTRUCTIONS TO INDIVIDUAL FIRMS IN THIS SECTOR. HE DID HOWEVER, INDICATE THAT PURSUANT TO OUR CONTACTS REQUESTING APPOINTMENTS, SEVERAL FIRMS HAD OF THEIR OWN ACCORD ASKED FOR GUIDANCE FROM THE DREE. CONSEQUENTLY TESSIER IS MEETING WITH THESE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR AT THE DREE TOMORROW TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT STUDY. HE HAS PROMISED TO INFORM US REGARDING THE SENSE OF THAT MEETING.

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2. ALTHOUGH TESSIER STRESSED THAT THE GOF IS NOT ADVISING FIRMS AGAINST MEETING WITH THE GAO, HE DID INDICATE THAT THE GOF FINDS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY (AS STATED PARA 2 REFTL A) TO BE WORRISOME. IN PARTICULAR THEY ARE CONCERNED BY THE NATURE OF THE QUESTIONS POSED ON A GAO QUESTIONNAIRE FORWARDED FROM

ITS US OFFICES TO FRANCO-BELGE HERE IN PARIS.

3. WE EMPHASIZED THAT THIS INQUIRY OFFERS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FRENCH FIRMS TO MAKE THEIR VIEWS KNOWN IN THE INTEREST OF GIVING THE CONGRESS A BALANCED VIEWPOINT. WE ALSO INDICATED THAT ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT WISH TO PRESSURE EITHER THE GOF OR PRIVATE FRENCH FIRMS, WE DID WISH TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO MEET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GAO. WE EVEN SUGGESTED THAT BARRING INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS, A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION COULD BE ARRANGED AT THE DREE TO INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR, BUT TESSIER TURNED THAT DOWN SINCE IT WOULD INCORRECTLY INDICATE A LINK BETWEEN THE GOF POLICY AND DECISIONS OF INDIVIDUAL FIRMS.

4. WE BELIEVE THAT TESSIER AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DREE ARE WILLING TO ASSIST THE GAO IN MAKING THIS STUDY. TESSIER SAID HOWEVER THAT HE DOUBTED THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF A FRENCH ORGANIZATION COMPARABLE TO THE GAO WOULD BE WELCOMED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF US FIRMS IN A SIMILAR SITUATION. WE ARE THEREFORE NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT TOMORROW'S MEETING WILL SIGNIFICANTLY CHANGE THE LACK OF POSITIVE RESPONSES TO OUR REQUESTS TO PRIVATE FIRMS.

GAMMON

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